

them their trespasses, but they never entertain the idea that they should be equally as willing to forgive others their trespasses. Every time a man of this nature repeats the Lord's prayer he utters a gross lie. Because unless we forgive others we have not the privilege to put up this petition. We sometimes forget that we are all sinners. There are a great many people who are so egoistic, conceity, and self-centered that they erroneously entertain the idea that they never committed a wrong, and as a rule these are the very people who if they come in contact with one who has made a serious mistake in life, of which he may have repented a hundred times, they will congratulate themselves because they are so very good, never did commit a sin, and the same time they are too blind in their own self-conceit to see or know that the very thoughts which they entertain condemn them before God. The following is their secret prayer: "God I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess," while praying thus with themselves they pray for others, "God be merciful to them sinners."

There is more beauty and more to love in the prodigal who has repented, with all his riotous living and the waste of patrimony, than in the grudging elder brother, whose life is blameless, if it were not for the one lifelong sin of a loneless heart. It is very true that the prodigal sinned grossly, but it is also equally true that he repented graciously.

One of the great beauties of this story is in the father's love and forgiveness and welcome for his penitent boy. It is a true picture of the longing love of our heavenly Father for us even while we are far away from him in sin. There is one important point here, the son had to come to himself, repent and return to his father before the father forgave him. In this same manner we must repent and go to God in His own appointed way, through Jesus Christ his Son, if we desire to be forgiven.

## WHY YOUNG MEN NEED THE CHURCH. NO. 2.

(From the Golden Rule. Boston.)

### THE UPLIFT OF FELLOWSHIP.

Young men need the church because it furnishes what to them is of the highest moment—the noblest and purest of fellowships. It is admitted that many who wear the badge of our Savior are not perfect, but it must at the same time be conceded that among his followers are to be found some of the loftiest souls, men of

the most brilliant genius, women of the most consecrated and elevated thoughts and aims, and that nowhere on earth can there be found, taken as a whole, a more marvellous assemblage of the true and the good.

It is well known that we are made by companionships. We enter a society, and just as a barometer is affected by the atmosphere, so it will be found that our moral character will rise or fall according to the prevailing tone of the assembly. A man enters a theatre, and by and by he is conscious of a change; he may not be able to understand it. If he passes from the hall of amusement into a cathedral, he is conscious of another change; he may not comprehend it. The fact is, the very environment has depressed his spiritual life, or has tended to lift it up nearer to the ideals that are supposed to render beautiful the holy places where our Lord meets with his disciples.

The difference between a group of people in a prayer meeting, and another group in a gambling-hall or in a saloon, possibly cannot be altogether clearly defined, but I suppose there is not a being who has entered both places at some time in his career but has felt in the one an exaltation and in the other a sense of degradation. It is, I presume, rarely realized that all other fellowships, existing to day in the various societies that add beauty to our age, whether of men or of women or of both together, have their earliest pattern in the community of the faithful. The Roman empire hardly tolerated even guilds among workmen; and all subsequent social combinations are the outgrowth of successful experiments on the part of believers to maintain a Christian brotherhood.

Where, then, shall a young man find greater help, truer encouragement, and more stimulating inspiration to sobriety and uprightness than in the membership of a church of Jesus Christ?

### THE CHURCH WORKSHOP.

But, in addition to this, he needs the assembly of the faithful because of the instruction it imparts and the facilities it offers for the development of practical usefulness. The mind that does not acquire is rapidly losing what is previously attained. Knowledge is a singular possession; if we multiply it, we retain the principal as well as the interest; if we neglect that which we have, in a little while we have neither interest nor principal. The danger is that, in the rush after worldly possessions, the mind may be given almost exclusively to the accumulation of worldly wisdom, and in a little while newspapers, magazines, and other literature, excellent

in themselves, may altogether usurp attention.

No man can afford to be educated in a one-sided manner. He needs to cultivate the spiritual and emotional as well as the purely intellectual and volitional. Hence he cannot dispense with his Bible; but he is not likely to give adequate attention to its teachings unless he is associated with others, and feels the influence that comes from united study.

Those of us who have been obliged to pursue various investigations in private realize the inestimable value of fellowship in such pursuits. Had we our way and could we retrace our steps, we should prefer to do in company what we have been obliged to do alone. My observation also, as well as my experience, convinces me that the young man who believes he will study his Bible by himself in the majority of instances will make up to find that he has deluded himself, and that it would have been far better had he regularly attended a place of worship, received the pulpit ministrations, allied himself with a Sunday-school class, and given practically one day in seven to the cultivation of the intellectual side of religious living.

If it is necessary for worldly purposes to read the daily papers, to keep in mind a knowledge of contemporaneous events, must it not also be equally important to follow the movements that are daily occurring in the religious world, and be able to associate them with the vast changes that are recorded in the Bible, through which we are able to obtain a consistent, homogeneous view of God in the history of mankind?

But when such knowledge has been attained, or is in process of attainment, a young man sadly needs some one to suggest in what way it can most readily and wisely be applied. Doctrine is as the wind that blows; sagacious principles are the sails that are set to catch the breezes. Dogma is the mill-race; service is the wheel; and the former is designed to turn the latter. The two are intimately related; the one is as thought to the body; the other as the members of the body which execute the designs of thought.

Therefore, every student of the Scriptures ought continually to ask, In what way can I make that which I am learning of use to myself and others? And in the great world, where there are so many errors committed, and where so many individuals fail to accomplish anything worth noting, and where, indeed, so many careers are blighted because of impracticable fancies, how great the blessing to have some man or body of men and wo-